

Navigating Power & Privilege in Ministry & Missions

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Group Agreements

- Practice resilience in listening, even when it's hard
- Engage tension, don't indulge drama
- Make space, take space
- Assume the best intentions—BUT recognize and attend to the impact
- Ask questions! Resist the temptation to assume
- Honor confidentiality--take the lessons, leave the details





Power
the ability to act

Privilege
(unearned) benefit or advantage

How Unequal Power Relations Get Perpetuated 1/3

Tendencies of People in Privileged Positions

Defines parameters and what's appropriate

Assumes responsibilities for keeping system on course, acts

Self-image of superiority, competence, in control, entitled, correct

Seeks to stand out as special

Assume anything is possible. I can do whatever I want and so can everyone else. No limits in current situation.

Initiates, manages, plans, projects

Tendencies of People in Oppressed Positions

Looks to expert for definition. Feels inappropriate, doesn't trust own perception

Blames self for not having capacity to change situation

Self-image of inferiority, incompetent, being controlled, not entitled, low self-esteem

Secure in background, vulnerable when singled out

Feels confined by circumstances, limits aspirations. Current situations limited by past constraints.

Responds, deals, copes, survives

How Unequal Power Relations Get Perpetuated 2/3

Tendencies of People in Privileged Positions

Problems & situations seen in personal terms

Experiences & feelings as unique, disconnected, need to verbalize feelings

Solutions to problems as having better feelings

Own view of reality is the only one and obvious to all, assumes everyone agrees with their view. Disagreement is because of lack of info, misunderstanding, personality difference.

Certain kind of work as below their dignity

Doesn't believe or trust others' ability to lead

Unaware of hypocrisy, contradictions

Tendencies of People in Oppressed Positions

Problems seen in social context, systemic

Experiences & feelings as collectively understood, shared, no point talking abt them

Solutions to problems in actions that change

Always aware of at least two views of reality, their own and that of dominant group

Certain kind of work as beyond their ability

Doesn't believe in own capacity for leadership

Aware of contradictions, irony, hypocrisy

How Unequal Power Relations Get Perpetuated 3/3

Tendencies of People in Privileged Positions

Fear of losing control, public embarrassment

Regards own culture as civilized, others' as underdeveloped or disadvantaged. Turns to others' cultures to enrich humanity while invalidating it by consider it exotic.

Oppression seen as a problem in the past and wants others to "just get over it"

Feels uncomfortable reading about these patterns

Tendencies of People in Oppressed Positions

Able to laugh at self and others, humor as way to deal with pain

Feels own culture is devalued. Uses cultural forms to impact situation. Humor, music, poetry, art, etc. celebrate collective experience and community.

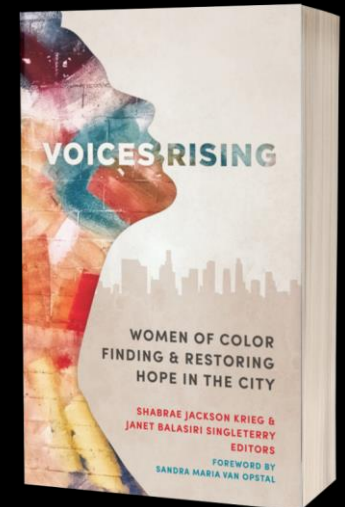
Reminded in countless ways, daily, of the pervasive presence of oppression

Feels validated reading about these patterns

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